1. **If the project received funding for broadband planning, please describe
   progress made against all goals, objectives, and milestones detailed in the approved project plan.
   Be sure to include a description of each major activity/milestone that you plan to complete and
   your current status.** (Answer below.)

The Nebraska Information Technology Commission Community Council (NITC), University of Nebraska -
Lincoln (UNL), Nebraska Department of Economic Development (DED) and the AIM Institute are
cooperatively leading the effort to address the broadband planning needs of Nebraska's communities.
UNL is the fiscal agent for the planning part of the grant.

A number of activities were identified in the initial grant to identify barriers to the adoption of
broadband and IT services, creating and facilitating local technology planning teams, and collaborating
with broadband service providers to encourage broadband deployment and use.  In the supplemental
grant, activities were focused around three projects:  capacity building, technical assistance and local
planning.  Following the NITA guidance and recent Webinar recommendation, the quarterly report will
focus on the three project areas.  For each section area, there is an overall summary of the project and
then a quarterly update of the particular area.

**CAPACITY BUILDING**

**Internet Connectivity and Use in Nebraska:  A Household Survey – initial and follow-up.**

Nebraskans were surveyed about their computer and Internet usage, challenges and desires for the
future through a survey conducted by UNL.  The survey, mailed in February 2010, to 6,600 Nebraskans
achieved a 47% response rate.  The report, available at broadband.nebraska.gov, highlights regional,
education, income, age, gender, racial and ethnic group comparisons.

A follow-up survey of households will be conducted in 2014 (Year 5 of grant) to document
changes in Internet and broadband use since the initial survey. Regions that were originally
identified as either unserved or underserved in the initial survey will be over-sampled in this
follow-up survey.

> *2nd Quarter 2013 Status Update.*  Plans are underway to conduct follow-up household
> survey beginning of 2014. Decision to over-sample in under-served areas was made (i.e.,
> North Central and Central Nebraska as well as certain areas of Omaha).

*Business Survey*

Businesses will be surveyed through the Department of Economic Development's Business Retention
and Expansion program to identify the strengths and challenges they face in utilizing technology.  To
develop the statewide plan, over 1000 businesses will be included in the database as communities and
regions have the capability to gather information from all types of businesses including retail, health
care and services.  The BR&E survey asks over 10 specific questions related to technology and
broadband utilization.  Additional questions will be developed that relate specifically to future
opportunities.  The data will be pulled together and themes will be developed.

*2nd Quarter 2013 Status Update.*  DED continues to encourage communities to share broadband data in the BR&E program.  During Q2 determined to work with Strategic Network Group (SNG) to identify benchmarks statewide around broadband. Explained further under technical assistance and focused surveys.

***Inventory of Broadband and Digital Literacy Programs.***  In order to identify potential partners and to avoid duplication of efforts, an inventory of broadband and digital literacy programs will be conducted. Results will be shared with project partners, regional teams and be available on the broadband portal.

*2nd Quarter 2013 Status Update*.  Information continues to be updated.  During Q2 began to look at the data from the perspective of what can be maintained after the grant.  Q3 will begin identifying resources available in communities to assist businesses related to the SNG business development process.

***Focused Surveys***.  Focused surveys in regions where there are large numbers of non-adopters will help to better understand how to increase broadband adoption.  The surveys will be conducted in specific counties, regions and in some parts of metropolitan areas where usage appears to be lower and will provide these areas with data specific to them that can be used to develop a plan that addresses their future needs.  The surveys will also create local benchmark data that will help determine if broadband adoption increases in these areas over time.

*2nd Quarter 2013 Status Update.*  The focused survey effort will primarily be around business. Working with the Strategic Network Group, a survey will be conducted to businesses across the state to establish benchmarks.  The survey is anticipated to launch during Q3 2013.  Nebraska survey researchers will work with SNG in analysis and further breakdown of the data.

***Government and Economic Developer Survey***.  To gather information on access, adoption, usage, and technical assistance needs of all county and community governments, chambers of commerce, and for economic developers, a survey (web-based where feasible) of all entities will be conducted.  This information will support the development of regional and community technology plans and will be used to develop targeted technical assistance for local governments and economic developers.

*2nd Quarter 2013 Status Update*.  Surveys were conducted with the Nebraska Economic Development Association, Nebraska Association of County Officials, and the League of Nebraska Municipalities during Q2 2012.  During Q4 the full reports were written and are available at broadband.nebraska.gov.  In Q2 and Q3 2013, renewed efforts will be made to connect with the economic developers and county organizations.  Representatives from the broadband planning groups were in attendance at the Nebraska Association of County Officials and there were conversations with participants about importance of broadband and utilizing technology.

***Creating Broadband Plan/Administrative*** – To meet the objectives of grant, the broadband planning oversight team meets on a bi-monthly basis and quarterly with PSC commissioners.

*2nd Quarter 2013 Status Update*: - In July 2013, efforts will be made to share how broadband availability has changed since the beginning of the grant project.  This will be accomplished through press releases and social media outlets.  The goal will be to direct individuals back to

the speed test.  This effort, originally planned in Quarter 2, was delayed due to staffing changes with the mapping partner.  The broadband planning efforts were highlighted at the Nebraska Economic Development Association and Infotech.  The Planning team has strategically determined to focus primarily on businesses through the remainder of the grant; however, conversations will be held with other groups.

Beginning in Q3, the regional plans will be released and create an opportunity for feedback into the statewide plan.  Simultaneously, the statewide plan will development/process will begin.  Initial meetings will begin in September 2013.

**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

Three cross-training efforts were identified in the Supplemental Application to address broadband adoption and utilization.  These efforts outlined below are the Statewide Conference, Regional Workshops and Webinars.

***Statewide Conference***.  The statewide conference will be focused on broadband adoption and utilization will bring together many industries including those working in economic development, telecommunications industry, education, state government, and local government personnel.

> *2nd Quarter 2013 Status Update*:   Status.  The agenda is complete and final speaker recruitment is underway for the 2013 Broadband Connecting Nebraska conference on October 16-17 in Kearney, Nebraska.  Keynote speakers include technology entrepreneur Steve Kiene (Oct. 16 opening keynot), futurist Jack Uldrich (Oct. 16 luncheon keynote) and U.S. Senator Deb Fischer is invited (Oct. 16 closing keynote).  Broadband economist Michael Curri will provide a keynote on broadband ROI during the Oct. 17 session, and Larry Strickland from NTIA and Governor Dave Heinman have been invited to provide in-person or video keynotes.  Panelists for several breakout sessions highlighting Nebraska success stories have been identified and are being recruited.  A youth track is being developed to coincide with the breakout sessions.  Students will be included for the keynote addresses by Steve Kiene and Jack Uldrich.  Plans for Q3 include completion of speaker recruitment, launch of the online registration site, and marketing/promotion for the conference.

***Regional Workshops.***  Regional workshops will be held to address specific issues related to an area on broadband adoption and utilization.

> *2nd Quarter 2013 Status Update:*  After focus groups and working with regional groups, many common themes were identified for the regional workshops.  Plans are underway to create workshops that will highlight the planning efforts and challenge participants to think about how broadband can be utilized to enhance their communities and businesses.  The format will be similar for all regions and offered at several locations across a region to touch as many participants as possible.  Workshops will be held late 2012 or early 2013.

***Webinars***.  Up to four webinars will be held each year to address broadband adoption and utilization.  Topics may include how to set up community planning groups to sharing results of the various data collections, processes and best practices.

> *2nd Quarter 2013 Status Update*:   Fourteen (14) webinars have been held since 4th quarter 2011.  Participation in webinars have averaged 50 participants and follow-up viewings have ranged from 21-317.  Webinars that have had the most views include a Broadband 101 webinar in 2011.  In 2nd Quarter 2013, a series entitled "Don't Know What I Don't Know" began and focused on three areas – cloud computing, security and mobile.  The interactive webinars have

created an interest.  During Q2 determined to hold off on Webinars until Fall 2013.  Webinars are archived at http://broadband.nebraska.gov/events.

**Best Practice Videos.**  One way to expand broadband adoption across Nebraska is to learn from communities, businesses and other organizations who are the early adopters and "get it."  This project initiative will identify at least 20 examples of best practices throughout Nebraska and conduct video interviews with key players.  These individuals will be asked to describe the essential elements of their success.

> *2nd Quarter 2013 Status Update*:  Status:  37 videos have now been launched through the broadband efforts.  Views have ranged from a low of 5 to 169.   Best practice videos have highlighted the benefits of broadband technology.  During late Q2 efforts were made to feature a new video on the front page of the Broadband home page which has increased viewership.  For example, a video highlighting the use of technology in a cattle feedlot operation has had an additional 41 views during Q2.   During Q3 will begin to explore how to share these information and videos by subject areas to businesses participating in the benchmarking process as examples of how broadband/technology can be a positive influence.  Videos are archived at http://broadband.nebraska.gov/videos or visit the Youtube channel has been created to host the videos - Http://Youtube.com/broadbandnebraska.

**Entrepreneur Acceleration System (EAS).**   This project has the potential to be a model for other states as they develop entrepreneurs .The 2011 cohort concluded during Quarter 4 2011 with the 2011 Impact Summit. Forty-six guides/mentors were selected for the 2012 EAS program which started in 1Q 2012. These guides selected 160 companies and 746 managers to work with through the program, impacting almost 5,000 employees in Nebraska. Participating companies attend the four core workshops led by Gallup in Quarter 1 through 3 of 2012. Companies are also provided one on one support from a Gallup trained guide and participate in self-paced activities administered online throughout program.   Results are on broadband.nebraska.gov.

> *2nd Quarter 2013 Status Update*:  Status: The broadband component of this activity is completed.  A follow-up report of the businesses will be available during Q3 2013.

**Technical Assistance Expertise.** The focus of this effort will be to provide technical assistance in the area of business and entrepreneurism to chambers of commerce, economic developers, and local and county stakeholders statewide and regionally to increase broadband adoption.

> *2nd Quarter 2013 Status Update*:  The surveys, focused conversations and planning efforts have consistently shown that many businesses in the State of Nebraska do not understand how technology and broadband can be used to enhance their bottom line.  Over the past six months, the planning team has explored various ways to show businesses the return on investment (ROI) in using broadband.  During Q2, the broadband planning initiative partnered with the Strategic Network Group (SNG) on an approach to connect with businesses, build capacity within the state to work with businesses and to measure change/impact.  The process will begin with a survey being conducted with businesses beginning during Q3 2013.

**Broadband Portal Development -** Develop a central broadband portal which will serve as a source of information on broadband efforts in Nebraska and technical assistance materials.

*2nd Quarter 2013 Status Update* Website officially launched in April 2012. Since that time we have had 10,546 visits and 6,948 unique visitors with an average visit of 3:34. During the last quarter April through June, there were 1,920 visits and visits and 1,499 unique visits with 1,425 being new visitors and 494 returning. The average visit was 2:45. There was a considerable increase in operating systems and browsers during Q2 – as more visitors were accessing from mobile devices. During Q3 2013, the regional plans and the SNG Business development process will be featured and additional effort will be made to draw people to the website.

**LOCAL AND REGIONAL PLANNING**

***Regional Planning Teams.*** Regional planning teams were formed to conduct regional assessments, prioritize opportunities, and develop strategies. Regional coaches will assist planning teams in conducting the development of plans. Each of the regions will hold a regional forum. The forums will be conducted to present broadband mapping and mail survey results, to solicit feedback, and to kick off regional planning efforts. Project partners will work with regional planning teams to host forums to present broadband mapping data and mail survey results, to solicit feedback, and to kick off regional planning efforts. Over 300 individuals participated in the eight regional forums. Of these 300 individuals, around 80 initially indicated a willingness to serve on the planning teams. Regional coaches have additional planning members who represent a broad area of interest.

> *2nd Quarter 2013 Status Update*: The initial drafts of the regional plans were completed late May 2013. The North Central Regional plan was finalized during Q2. All plans will be completed early Q3. A summary report identifying the priorities of each region was created for the Public Service Commission during Q3. The regional plans reflect the differences and similarities in broadband adoption and internet use across the state. Digital literacy, health care and economic development, including agriculture, are cited often, as they are clearly areas where Nebraskans, and the communities in which they live, have the most to gain by adopting the latest broadband technologies. The realization of the priorities, the regional plans and the growing success of the regions, depend on access to broadband services by all geographic areas. Currently, access varies by region and community. Reliable access to high-speed Internet service and training are necessary to achieve increased adoption and use. In addition to access, digital literacy education is essential.

> Next steps will be to gather feedback on the plans and engage more people in conversation. The documents are designed to be fluid as feedback and additional partners are identified. The summary report and North Central Regional Plan are attached for reference.

> ***Community Planning - North/South Omaha***. North and south Omaha were identified as underserved regions/areas through the survey of Nebraska households. The AIM Institute and the Omaha metro region have combined efforts to address broadband adoption and utilization in the Omaha metro region.

> *2nd Quarter 2013 Status Update*: A draft strategic plan has been completed for the North/South Omaha planning project. Plans for Q3 are to have the draft reviewed by project partners with a final plan to be completed by the end of Q3. See summary report for details.

***Community Planning - Cultural and Unserved Communities.*** We will form additional community or local planning teams in regions/areas identified as underserved through the survey of Nebraska

households and broadband mapping data. Coaches with specific knowledge of these regional areas will be added to work specifically with these areas to develop plans relevant to their situation regarding broadband adoption and availability.

> *2nd Quarter 2013 Status Update*: The availability, accessibility and affordability of cell phones, computers and connectivity on the tribal lands are a challenge. To address these, planning efforts have focused on working with the Nebraska Indian Community College (NICC). The college goal is to support and provide the tribal communities with increased education, healthy lifestyles and cultural awareness for at least 50% of tribal youth, students and adults. Broadband can be a tool for achieving this overall goal. Priorities are education and communication access. See the summary report for more information.

*Focus Groups.* Seven to 10 focus groups will be held with anchor institutions and utility providers as well as populations with low usage rates to gain understanding into the barriers to broadband adoption and utilization from their perspective. Focus groups will also be held with businesses including farmers and ranchers.

> *2nd Quarter 2013 Status Update*: Status: Focus groups/focused conversations continued during Q2. Four focus groups were held in the **Western Region.** As in other regions of the state, availability of broadband is not equal in the communities. Those living outside the city limits expressed challenges of caps with phone service and reliability. The focus groups also revealed the digital literacy challenge with government entities in moving to more services to on-line. The Department of Revenue has needed to adjust deadlines in sales tax filings primarily due to skill level of businesses unable to enter the necessary data.

> Plans are underway to conduct focus groups in the Sandhills/central part of Nebraska. This is an area that is primarily rural. The focus groups will be designed to receive feedback on the regional plans and to gather additional input.

**Community Sector Discussions.** Community Sector discussions will be held to further advance adoption of technology in specific industries such as business and entrepreneurs, chambers of commerce, agriculture and the health industry**.** The focus of each discussion will be to benchmark technology use across the specific sectors, set goals for improved technology, and develop a plan to achieve goals.

> *2nd Quarter 2013 Status Update*: Agriculture and health are two community sector groups that have been identified. Conversations will be held during Q3/Q4 2013. Additional community sector conversations may be held as we continue to receive input on the regional plans.

For more information, contact Charlotte Narjes at cnarjes@unl.edu or Connie Hancock at chancock1@unl.edu.

**BROADBAND SUCCESS STORIES**

**SUCCESS STORIES FOR CAPACITY BUILDING**

The partnering efforts of the Nebraska Broadband Initiative have been a key to initial accomplishment of the goals of the grant. The Nebraska Information Technology Commission Community Council (NITC), University of Nebraska - Lincoln (UNL), Nebraska Department of Economic Development (DED) and the AIM Institute are cooperatively leading the effort to address the broadband planning needs of Nebraska's communities. This has included a broadband planning team that meets twice a month with representatives of each organization and the Public Service Commission. Attributes may include technology infrastructure knowledge to political astuteness and experience to connections across the state and education.

As we move to developing the statewide plan these partnerships will be key to the success.

**SUCCESS STORIES FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

One way to expand broadband adoption across Nebraska is to learn from communities, businesses and other organizations who are the early adopters and "get it." This project initiative has identified 35 best practice videos that are featured on the broadband.nebraska.gov website. For this quarter's success story, we are highlighting the City of Ogallala.

> A focus on technology needs and bringing high speed Internet access have made Ogallala, Nebraska ready to compete with cities worldwide. With a goal to "Build Your Future at Ogallala" they plan to attract and keep business and experts.

> Drew Krab, with Adams Bank & Trust and President of the Keith County Board of Directors, and Travis Haggard, Ogallala Economic Development Coordinator, have worked to identify technology infrastructure needs of existing business and to look ahead for future needs. These efforts have provided an environment that allows local business to use technology to meet business goals.

> This commitment provides Western Nebraska with a gateway to economic development. They believe that if communities and businesses have this access and take advantage of the opportunities, they can succeed.

Key points from the video include the benefits and results of using broadband technology.

*Benefits of Broadband Technology*
• Provide technology that is competitive on international level
• Provide and promote connectivity of equipment and resources
• Recognize and accommodate current and future technology needs

*Results of Broadband Technology*
• Retain and expand business operations and residents
• Provide world class technology operations for business advantages
• Provide gateway to economic development through broadband access

Videos are hosted at broadband.nebraska.gov.

**SUCCESS STORIES FOR REGIONAL PLANNING**

Regional plans are being finalized. The regional plans reflect the differences and similarities in broadband adoption and internet use across the state. Digital literacy, health care and economic development, including agriculture, are cited often, as they are clearly areas where Nebraskans, and the communities in which they live, have the most to gain by adopting the latest broadband technologies. The realization of the priorities, the regional plans and the growing success of the regions, depend on access to broadband services by all geographic areas. Currently, access varies by region and community. Reliable access to high-speed Internet service and training are necessary to achieve increased adoption and use. In addition to access, digital literacy education is essential.

Collaboration and key partners are another key factor in the success of the plan. The Northeast regional planning group has coordinated their activities with the Northeast Nebraska Economic Development District (NNEED). Broadband goals identified by the regional planning initiative are identified in the NNEED Regional Blueprint for Sustainability.